



**Pacific Northwest Region
Regional Office**

Edith Green-Wendell Wyatt Federal Building
1220 S.W. 3rd Avenue
Portland, OR 97204 www.fs.usda.gov/r6

News Release

**Contact: Glen Sachet, 503-808-2790
Matt McGrath, 425-583-9304**

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Secretary of Agriculture Appoints Members to the First Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Advisory Council

PORTLAND, Ore. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack recently appointed 23 members to the inaugural Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Advisory Council under the authority of the National Trails System Act. The council will advise the Secretary, through the Chief of the Forest Service, on management of the Pacific Northwest Trail in Montana, Idaho, and Washington. One of America's 11 National Scenic Trails and designated in 2009, the Pacific Northwest Trail is only the second such trail – alongside the Pacific Crest Trail – to traverse Washington State.

"We're excited to assemble such a diverse group of volunteers to collaborate with us in developing a plan designed to improve recreational opportunities and experiences, and support our unique mix of gateway communities," said Matt McGrath, Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Program Manager. "The strong interest in the council demonstrates the significance of the Pacific Northwest Trail as a truly national resource." The council is composed of citizens with diverse backgrounds chosen for their expertise in recreation-related issues, and ability to represent a balance of stakeholder perspectives and geographic areas. The council also includes representatives of the USDA Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management, which manage sections of the trail.

First proposed in 1970, this 1,200-mile route from the Continental Divide in Glacier National Park to the Pacific Ocean at Cape Alava in the Olympic National Park is a unique pathway traveling through some of the most spectacular and scenic terrain in the United States, and connects people and communities of the Pacific Northwest. As directed by the National Trails System Act, the Pacific Northwest Trail and other National Scenic Trails are sited to provide for maximum outdoor recreation opportunity as well as the conservation and enjoyment of the surrounding scenic, historic, natural, and cultural resources.

Establishing the council is a major milestone in the trail's short history. The Forest Service is cooperating with many other federal, state, and local agencies as well as private landowners to develop a trail-wide comprehensive plan. Over the next three years, the council will provide recommendations on trail uses, signage, establishing a trail corridor, and prioritizing projects.

For a list of the newly appointed members and more information about the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Advisory Council, visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/pnt/working-together/advisory-committees>.

The Pacific Northwest Region consists of 16 National Forests, 59 District Offices, a National Scenic Area, and a National Grassland comprising 24.7 million acres in Oregon and Washington and employing approximately 3,550 people. To learn more about the U.S. Forest Service in the Pacific Northwest, please visit <http://www.fs.usda.gov/r6>.

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